

3/26/72

Dear Js,

As I recently wrote you or one of my younger friends, I never kept a journal, as so many writers do, because I never had time. Of and on during my JFK work other writers have encouraged me to. The first of these was the left-wing poet Muriel Ruckysen, who I saw I think before I went into debt to print WHOTEMASH in an effort to get writers to help overcome unpublishability of viable topics. The last time I had seen her was when I had met her at an American Labor Party dinner in New York and I got so drunk I have absolutely no recollection of whatever, if, indeed, anything, transpired between us. All I know is that my then career (which comes back in a manner you will soon understand) entranced her, and the sparks and sparkle in her eyes were like the conversation that ensued between us, at which point my recollection stops.

I have the feeling that the brightest of my young and cherished friends have yet to fully comprehend that everything does not start with them, that except in their number and their own manner they have done and are doing nothing new. I know no young people who have participated in the anti-ROTC demonstrations, but in my own college career I fought it all alone. It cost me my degree.

Today's Book World has a typical review by that "efete snob" John Waltz, collaborator of John Kaplan in the anti-Belli Ruby book which is shor through with error of Robert Vaughn's ~~XX~~ study of Show Business Blacklisting. Ah, what that brings back so vividly!

Waltz refers to Vaughn's "Only Victims" as of worth in direct quotes from the Unamericans, beginning with Dies (Vaughn's and Waltz's scholarship is deficient, judging from the review, because that sorry business began with former Majority Leader McDormack, then a much younger hack Congressman and an Establishmentarian Jewish NYC Congressman Sam Dickstein, later a judge, both of whom I knew in that era, Sammy fairly well. I know Vaughn not from Man From Uncle, his successful TV spy thrillers, but from an incident in which an actor buff and then a friend in LA, one of those who ~~xxx~~ persuaded me to abandon WWII and go out there to get Liebelier off Lane's back, tried to help me. He gave Vaughn a copy of WW or of it and the second, in an effort to elicit some help. He never got any word or reaction.

I was twice a witness before the Unamericans of the Dies-Starnes days. I knew both of those finks personally. Starnes and I had such a round tha it is among one of the reasons they have never dared print my testimony, even when the second time it was really under star-chamber conditions. Dies, as a matter of fact, never faced me at either hearing, which I do not take as defamatory! If, as I hope someday happens, I am again there and less exhausted than on all other occasions and we have the time, I think it might be worthwhile taping an account of all of that. It is like a novel. Those saum actually held up the appointment of a federal judge to "get" me via a law they actually enacted against me; they convoked a grand jury for this purpose (the to-be judge was USAttorney for Washington), to took the damned grand-jury away from the DA's man who was later chief prosecutor at the Tokyo warcrimes trial, he wound up with such respect for that brash kid that he gave me an illegal gift - I have never, ever, heard of anything like this happening - a copy of the grand-jury minutes, for my protection in the future. And I got the Dies agent who had framed me indicted. To do this I had to fight my "liberal" associate, then John Lewis' lobbyist and formerly p.r. man for the Sacco-Vanzetti committee, who was pleading moderation and peace, that I placate the prosecutor and pacify the unfriendlies on the grand jury (he was getting full reports from the prosecution). Well, not all of that now.

The first book I ever planned was on the Dies committee. My research on it was simply fantastic. Some of it was used, is today unknown, but in small part is in the Congressional Record. Because of having to defend myself and make a living, I had the research done but had not gotten to the actual writing. Then came the war. Then came the Hollywood Ten, to which Vaughn and Waltz refer. For all their sophistication and wealth, for all their superficial courage, they did not know how to fight, even to survive. One night there came a knock on my door and there was a man with whom I had worked when I was with the Senate and with him one of the Ten, Dmytryk. They wanted help, so they could fight and defend themselves. I gave them everything they needed, everything they asked for. I had this stuff then arranged in dozens and dozens of notebooks, with even the clipings mounted with as much care as Je does now. I have them the irreplaceable, records of the Dies Committee's expenses. I had actually gotten all their expense accounts, and I had gotten three women to type copies of all this for me. (Aside-this is the source of Jack Spivack's famous expose

of Father Coughlin. I got all the financial records and gave them to Jack, who I then knew well. I helped with other famous books of that era, as with Leo Huberman's Labor Spy Racket, one that comes to mind. At the same time I got Republican National Committee records of payments to employed fascists, of whom I remember Vonsiatsky, Harold Lord Varney, Francis Sullivan and many others. I also got at this time and gave to the FBI some of the records of a planned US putsch involving the then chief of staff, General Malin Craig. I am not unknown to the FBI!).

Probably Dymtryk then said "thanks". I never got anything else, including the return of so much as a single page of my research, never heard from any one of the 10 again, and they didn't have the gumption to use what I had loaned them. They were fairly polite before the Committee, as was Hiss, and they all lost and went to jail. I do believe in Ecclesiastes' philosophy, and if I sometimes choose the time and place wrong, I am never unaware that there sometimes is occasion for the departure from the norm that is dinned into every ear today. The charges against me were much more serious than those against the 10. And that law, by the way, is still on the books.

The 10 were not alone in decimating my files. A now well known progressive New York lawyer borrowed another part for the defense of a client. He was then assistant general counsel of the CIO, and he had trades-unionist defendants in trouble. He also never returned a single page of what he borrowed. But at least his defense was successful.

For cause I do not now recall, sometime during the past week Dalton Trumbo's name popped into my mind. He knows nothing about the foregoing. Lil and I were fans of his. I think that unless they got lost during the war, when in storage or in our subsequent movings, we have a first editions of all his early, pre-movie especially work. It is magnificent. The reissue of Johnny Got His Gun is now his only well-known work. Almost all ought be regarded as classics. Am I wrong in recalling that his Remarkable Andrew made his first movie and him a screen writer? But I remember the book and the movie well.

Apparently Vaughn uses quotes on him. His name is in the review. And I would like to write him, on the off chance that with his history and my slight but costly part in it, with my having preceeded him in that kind of history, and with the doctrine of my present work, he might find some way in which he could help. If you know or can learn how he may be reached, I'd appreciate it.

I'm sending the review in the event it interests you.

I don't know if you can begin to imagine what the potential of my book on Dies could have been because I don't know if you were then in the country. Let me give you a few samples of what I had. I had the payment records to the man who framed me and a deposition I conned him into giving me, sworn to. I had Dies personal travel expenses showing that the government had paid him to go to his home and he was at his home in Orange, Texas, on the very day he allegedly held a hearing on Consumer's Union. It was then not the Establishmentarian thing it has become. It was an offshoot from another group that had been run by the late infamous J.B. Matthews, at the time of the "hearing" Dies research director, the "hirkey Temple Is a Red Man. That entire hearing was faked, just typed up and made to appear as though a hearing had actually been held--or Dies defrauded the government (as in getting them to pay for his trip home he did in any event). And I had traced a Committee Report on Japanese spying to an unknown West Coast newsletter. The report plagiarized it word for word, typo for typo, grammatical error for grammatical error. Joe McCarthy didn't invent the "I hold in my hand bit". I did it with a Congressman friend who held the report in one hand and the newsletter in the other and read them line for line, error for error. It was quite a thing. There have been few things like in on the floor of the House! Much more, but is this not enough to describe a real book? I don't know how much of my files remain intact. They are in old oak file cabinets that are broken. Once I open a drawer I have no place to put what I take out. Nor have I time. I know those files also hold much on The Early Hoover. And early fascist activities in the US.

Perhaps, aside from professional and character flaws, this history of which I am reminded by the review can explain some of my present positions, conduct and methods. That Congressman used to call me "Files". He meant it "Philes", his pun on Philo Vance, if you remember the character made famous by William Powell in the movies. You'd be surprised the stuff I dug up for him when he needed it to make his way around. Like the late respect Sol Bloom (he was then chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee) having a connection with Mussolini.

Another and extraneous incident of that era pops into my mind, two favors I did for Jack Warner for which I never got his thanks. I knew his Washington p.m. man pretty well. His name was Frank EdFalce. When they brought out "Confessions of a Nazi Spy" (Robinson is also in the book and review) I was asked to help on this. As I now recall, a New York writer named Wellington Roe was in on the p.r. work and also asked me. I arranged a private showing for all sorts of government officials and the Congress in the Department of Labor. Not a bad stunt, huh? Especially when you don't get paid for it. Well, the late Senator Gerald Nye then had pending a bill to prohibit the wearing of uniforms, like those of the German-American Bund. I knew him well, his former and his then assistant, and I got him to sponsor this thing. "With the passing of time Nye became first an isolationist and then the chairman of a committee to investigate some imagined treachery in the movie industry. Jack Warner was the witness, on the stand, and getting a very rough time. None of his people remembered this incident. I did, called Frank, gave him the papers I still had of that stunt I had pulled, they were used the next day at what you can well understand was the very last hearing that committee ever held. I also knew Nye later, in a friendly way. I never told him of this, tho. In fact, when I was farming he was one of my egg customers.

So, I go way back in many ways I have forgotten, all unknown to those who do not understand why I do what things the way I do (and, of course, sometimes am wrong). Or, if I may boast for

At this point I was interrupted and I've now forgotten that of which was about about to boast. I lived novels in those days. One was published on my Latin American work of that period. (The Jew made into the Anglo Matt Hall, as I recall, with a little fictitious sex thrown into jazz it up a bit.) It was a kind of crazy life (poor Lil-can anyone begin to imagine what it has meant to be married to such a man?) where I battled-and I think I won every fight-almost anyone who would battle. I never started any one, although my work and writing often triggered it. As I helped the FBI, so also did I successfully fight it when it tried to pull the kind of dirty stuff I have come to understand on me. Two agents once actually held me in what amounts to confinement in headquarters to get me to sign a false statement in the thing that ultimately went to the grand jury. For hours. I ghosted articles for cabinet members. One of my exposes hurt close political friends of Hugh Scott (ref my letter to Anderson), who was then a Congressman and on the House Patents Committee. That testimony also that committee never dared publish. And you out there in the Golden West may want to phone Bob Truehaft, who was a friend of the editor from college days and was the closest thing we had to a lawyer at that hearing. Walter Annenberg not being about to get involved in an affair like that one. Scott tried to whitewash the whole thing for his friends, the American branch of the Nazi inventors of Plexiglass. But I had two friends on his committee, unknown to him. One the brother of the co-sponsor of the Wagner Labor Law, Connery, and a fan of my writing and one who often put it in the Congressional Record; and a Washington "liberal", John Coffee. So, between the kind of thing in me that my young friends find out of their own characters and the time interjections of these two Congressman friends. Virtue Emerged Triumphant. Sidelight: when Brian McMahon, later father of the Atomic Energy Act, was Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division of DJ I was a friend of his, coming from living with him for four months on a famous prosecution. He then trusted me enough to take my advice over that of Homer Cummings, his patron (later my friend in another context) and Attorney General and delayed his running for the Senate from Connecticut one election and got elected first time. Well, in this case, who was before he ran for the Senate and when he was practicing law in Washington, who do you think represented the company. Rohn & Haas, in Phila and elsewhere? Brien's law firm, and the lawyer on the case openly was the one to whom I had been closest when he also had been with Justice!

I am physically weary this morning from yesterday's liberation efforts. I came to some hobeysuckle and some roses that were too much for me alone. The interruption was two kids who came to move some stones and bricks for me with a small tractor-trailer they have, and when they finish that the three of us will attempt to complete the liberation of that bull pine by pulling out those long and thick stems I could not alone. Perhaps that is why this review triggered the reminiscences. Also, of course, these will serve as parts of a substitute for a journal. I think I'll send copies to two of these young friends, with the request that they regard the contents as confidential, but with the added request that they

also try to understand some of the things I do they can't agree with, some of the approaches I use that are foreign to them, some of my thoughts that are unlike what they have been taught in school and foreign to their own experiences. This is not to argue that because I have had such and many other experiences I have to be right. I have been wrong and I will be again. But all of us are the creatures of the totalities of our lives and experiences and individual characters. Thus I do things my way, think my way. I also suggest they should try to think in ways other than they have been schooled to, for the mind like the bones tends to grow less flexible with age.

It is probably another futility to attempt to contact Trumbo, but I think, with all the time I waste, I'd waste a bit that way if you know or can get me his address.

I'll be sending a clip from the Post on what Public TV is replaying from BBC. My point is not to tempt you into getting a TV in your poor-~~xxx~~ reception area, etc., but to show that when Britain, with less resources, can use this medium for legitimate purposes, we also can. The difference is that we do not dare. Several of these six and eight part series have been done commercially in the US and then repeated on Public TV, example that comes to mind being the six parts of Henry VIII. I have tried to see all 8 parts of Elizabeth Rex, and I think I did. Each ran an hour and a half, and I think it was well worth it, besides being relaxing to both of us. We saw Henry on CBS. I don't know if we'll find The Last of the Mohicans worthwhile, but we'll probably look at the first to see. The honesty of these British Government productions is incredible compared to US TV, esp. Public, where they have less concern about money-offenses. It makes more obvious how ours is a professional wasteland except for the rare good public affairs shows. By the way, the NBC First Tuesday series that did so great a job on Army domestic spying has died, naturally. That is the history of every such series of which I have recollection. Going back to Murrow.

Today's Post has what has become its typical approach on the ITT etc flap. They have a very short p.1 story on ITT's claims about its studies (not including the essential ones) of the Beard memo and comparisons, the beginning of a long piece on Flanigan on the first age, and several columns on Kleindienst on the inside, plus a light one on the impact in Chile, half-way defense of the CIA part. But of the real substance and deficiencies of the FBI's and ITT's "studies", not enough for critical analyses. I did see enough in one quote from Hoover to persuade me of the validity of my instinct, his typical language referring to "all the submitted samples." All will be give false and misleading emphasis by those who read it and none who read will fully appreciate the real meaning of "submitted". It is his out, as "all" is his distortion and exaggeration. All implies that he really got all. He could not have. Submitted means in the way he will use of he has to that he had nothing to go on except that which was submitted. Not that he could not have asked for and gotten more. And in the hurlyburly, if there is any, nobody will pay any attention to the fact that as of this minute, in what has been published that I have seen, the most obvious tests and examinations were never made by anyone. M. Cunegonde was right for some. For them this is the best of possible worlds.

Best,